

Blue Ribbon Facilities Questions

1. **What is the charge of the Blue Ribbon Committee? Is it for right-sizing/consolidation/or is it a bond issue?**

The three Overarching Questions for this Blue Ribbon Committee to address are:

1. If the Plante Moran CRESA facilities report is credible and verifiable information, can it be used to develop a sustainable facilities plan?
2. What the GPPSS footprint needs are now, 5 years from now, 10 years from now, for our educational programming?
3. What funding is needed to sustain the educational program our community expects for its students and from its neighborhood schools?

2. **How is utilization defined?**

Building Utilization is defined by the Michigan Department of Treasury by listing the number of teacher stations within a facility and comparing to the capacity factor (number of proposed students in a classroom). This is then compared to the existing enrollment of the facility. The result of this equation is the percentage of the available capacity of a building. For example, there are 18 full size classrooms for general education instruction. The District's operational goals are 25 students per classroom. The actual enrollment in the facility is 300 students. For this example, the calculated utilization of this facility would be 67%

Example:

18 classrooms x 25 students = 450 student capacity

Actual enrollment of 300 students / 450 student capacity = 67%

3. **How is capacity defined?**

This is a function of the GPPSS board of education approved class size guidelines and the number of full size classrooms available for instruction. At the elementary school level, rooms being used for art, music, library, PE, a portion of the special education classrooms and computer labs were not considered as available for instruction. At the secondary level computer labs and a portion of the special education classrooms were excluded from the capacity and utilization calculations.

4. **When a person visits a school, rarely is a room sitting empty. Each of our buildings appears to be fully utilized. Please explain that.**

Almost every room in the district is being used for something (teacher, storage, etc.) While some rooms are being used for K-12 instruction for a majority of the day, other rooms are only being partially used for that purpose. For example, if a building is currently using a full sized classroom to provide intermittent instruction to 3 students, that room is being used, but the capacity and utilization of that room is not being fully realized. For the purposes of PMC's analysis, a room being used in that way would be counted as part of the building that is not being used to full capacity.

5. **How did Plante Moran determine capacity and utilization in their original report to the Board of Education and Blue Ribbon Committee?**

Think of utilization as the percent of potential capacity per classroom. The average goal is 85% utilization of capacity. Please find the following details to the calculation:

- GPPSS Administration and PMC toured each educational facility

- Determined total number of full size classrooms within the facility
- Reduced the total number of full size classrooms to exclude art, music, computer labs, and special education (required student: teacher ratios in special education classrooms would not fit the PMC formula and would skew utilization percentages)
- Multiplied the remaining classrooms by number of students per classroom per GPPSS' educational guidelines (see below) – equals capacity
- For utilization, divide the current number of enrolled kids by the capacity

Example:

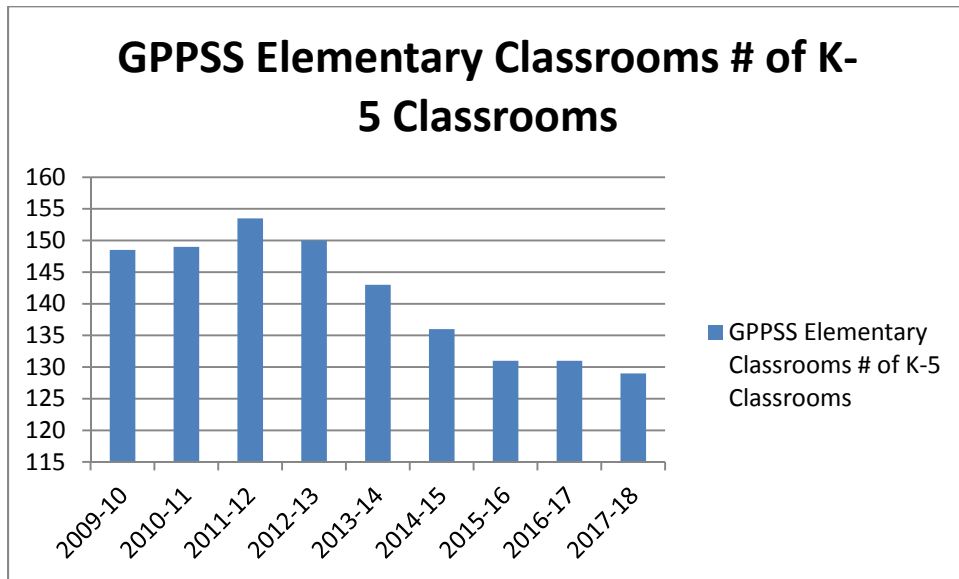
24 total classrooms – 3 classrooms (art, music, computer lab) = 21 classrooms

21 classrooms x 25 students = 525 student capacity

Current enrollment of 425 students divided by 525 student capacity = 81% utilization

6. Enrollment has declined in GPPSS during the past 15 years. Has the number of elementary school K-5 sections changed?

Yes. Per the chart below in 2011-12 the district had 153.5 sections of K-5. This year the number of K-5 sections is 129. This is a difference of 24.5 classrooms. In effect, 24.5 rooms once used for K-5 instruction are now being used for something else. This change is reflected in the decreased % of the capacity being used in the district.



7. What are the GPPSS Elementary Class Size Guidelines?

The Board of Education has established these guidelines for elementary classrooms:

- Kindergarten = 24 students
- 1st-3rd grades = 27 students
- 4th and 5th grades = 29 students

8. Are there class size guidelines at the secondary level?

No, there are not in the same way that elementary schools have class sizes. The BOE has asked administration to ensure that classes at the secondary level have at least 20 students except for some support classes. For the 2017-18 school year the secondary student: teacher ratio is

approximately 21.5:1. However, the average class size at the secondary level is approximately 28 students per class.

9. How else could we use available space?

This is where the district is seeking creative ideas from the community. All are welcome to share what needs could be met within our buildings. Recent suggestions include: partnerships with local health organizations to provide student clinics (doctor, dentist) in the schools, leasing to gymnastics and yoga groups. Please submit ideas to fannonr@gpschools.org.

10. How does staffing relate to capacity?

GPPSS has been reducing staffing as enrollment has dropped. It must be noted that children do not leave in groups of 25 at a grade level at a building, but by two's and three's spread out across the district.

11. As enrollment has decreased, has the district reduced staff?

During the past 5 years the GPPSS has eliminated 53.15 teaching positions. In addition, clerical and support staff positions have been eliminated as well.

12. What is walking distance? Is maintaining that a priority?

Whether walking distance is a priority must be determined by the committee, board and community. As it is now, most students at the nine elementary schools live within a mile of their school. "Walking" distance is longer for the three middle school and then again for the two high schools.

13. How many students can our cafeterias hold at one time?

This varies by building. Technically we only have 3 cafeterias – Brownell, North and South. In the elementary schools and other middle schools, students eat in the gyms. Samples:

- Barnes – 144 at a time
- Defer – 171 (two lunches -- K, 4,5/1,2,3)
- Kerby – 240, two lunches
- Poupard – 180-200
- Richard – 240
- Trombly – 140 (7 classes plus separate table for students with severe allergies)
- Brownell – 350 (small) bodies
- Parcels – 608 at a time (19 tables x 2 gyms = 38 tables x 16 kids per table)
- Pierce – 342-380 (depending on size of kids, 18-20 per table x 19 tables)
- North – 310 including the commons, 216 for just the cafeteria.

14. How much parking does each school have?

This varies by building.

15. Which buildings have seen the most significant change in enrollment and number of classrooms?

Please see the "Nine year change in elementary enrollment, class size and staffing ratios" document.

16. How do we compare to other high performing districts in relation to class size?

This sounds like an easy number to determine, but teacher numbers per district are not publically available. Administration is working with our peer districts to gather this data.

17. How do special education programs affect building capacity calculations?

Dedicated special education classroom(s) were not included in the available classroom count when calculating building capacity. There were situations where during the GPPSS Administration and PMC site visits, it was determined that a classroom currently used for a special education program could be used for general instruction since there were special education spaces available in the building.

18. What are the capacity and operating expenses at Barnes?

Because Barnes is an early childhood building focused on meeting the needs of special education and preschool children, with very specific ratios for each program, the same methodology used for elementary, middle and high school buildings could not be applied. Barnes will be considered as a unique case. Square footage, utility and other data sets are available.

19. Will renovations promote equity among buildings?

Without further information, providing an answer to this question is difficult.

20. What is security for each school? Does it include moving office for secure entrances?

Compliance One completed a security audit of each of the GPPSS facilities last year. That audit recommended that each building be reconfigured to ensure the main entrance of the building was located in such a way that visitors directly entered the office. Currently, only Grosse Pointe North is configured in that manner.

21. What will the community support?

GPPSS is relying on the committee for insight on this as they make their recommendations to the Board of Education. Town Halls will be conducted in the spring, as was done with Strategic Planning, to gather more community input. Ultimately it will be up to voters to decide.

22. What is in the “critical needs” column

Critical needs were defined by industry standards and the existing systems useful life calculation and interpreted by PMC during the site visits as elements requiring replacement within 1-3 years.

23. What is really in “deferred/enhancements”?

Deferred projects and enhancements were defined by industry standards and interpreted by PMC during the site visits as elements requiring replacement within a 10 year strategic capital plan.

24. What is the per pupil funding amount per district compared to our \$9,924?

Via Proposal A and the funding mechanism provided by the State of Michigan per pupil funding varies in Michigan from a minimum of \$7511 per pupil to a maximum of \$12,604 per pupil (Bloomfield Hills).

25. Explain Hold Harmless district funding

In the simplest of terms, when Proposal A passed in 1994, a minimum per pupil amount (\$6,500) was established across the state. 52 Districts that were already spending more than that per pupil minimum prior to Proposal A, were allowed to ask voters if they would levy an additional millage (above the agreed upon 6 mills) to remain at their Pre-Proposal A level. In other words, those districts would be allowed to ask their community to “Hold Harmless” and not reduce per pupil spending to the State level. GPPSS voters have continued to approve a formula driven rate that

delivers the same additional amount per pupil (\$1,893) since 1995. It is approximately 15% of the total GPPSS revenue.

26. What is the annual GPPSS budget?

The GPPSS annual budget is approximately \$100 million. Please see the [2017-18 Budget](#) link from the main page of the district website, far right column.

27. Where does money for projected maintenance come from?

Money for maintenance comes from a variety of sources. Currently the district has a 1 mill sinking fund that generates approximately \$2.6 million per year. General fund dollars are also used. In the past, the district has used fund equity for emergencies. The Wayne County Enhancement Millage is also a potential source (2 mills for 6 years passed in 2016 by the majority of Wayne County voters, distributed on a per pupil basis to districts, GPPSS receives approximately \$3 million).

28. What factors are used to determine peer districts?

There are several districts that regularly compare themselves and share best practices in terms of academics, spending, enrollment and programs. These include but are not limited to: Ann Arbor, Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Chippewa Valley, East Grand Rapids, Farmington, Forest Hills, Grosse Ile, Grosse Pointe, Harper Woods, Northville, Novi, Plymouth Canton, Rochester, Troy, and West Bloomfield.

29. What is the percentage of children attending private school in our peer districts compared to 18% in GPPSS?

This varies by district and is difficult to truly determine. The following are the high, mid, and low range of GPPSS peer districts and their percentages of students attending of private school:

Birmingham Public Schools	24%
Bloomfield Hills Schools	23%
Northville Public Schools	15%
Ann Arbor Public Schools	14%
Farmington Public Schools	11%
Novi Community Schools	8%

30. What can we do to attract the 18% in Grosse Pointe currently attending private schools to our public schools?

Based on information presented to the BOE in the Spring of 2017, the enrollment at each of the private/parochial schools within or adjacent to GPPSS has declined at a rate greater than the rate of the decline of GPPSS enrollment. The most powerful marketing tool remains word of mouth. Currently the budget for traditional marketing is small and our biggest event is the annual Open House in November (11/12/17 from 1-3 p.m.) and personalized tours offered at families' convenience either by contacting the school principal or filling out the online [tour request form](#). Ideas are welcome.

31. What is the average age of homeowners and percentage of homes without school-aged children in our peer districts?

In Birmingham and Bloomfield, like GPPSS, about 80% of the homes do not have school-aged children and the median age is similar with most being Baby Boomers.

32. How many of our peer districts are School of Choice and what percentage of their student population is from School of Choice students?

The majority of our Peer District peers (as defined in identified in question #31) participate in some degree of Schools of Choice. Some districts including Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Novi and Northville do not participate in Schools of Choice.

33. How many homes would need to sell to families with 2.25 children to capture the drop in enrollment seen between entering kindergarten families and the graduating class?

Per the enrollment figures shared, GPPSS is experiencing a declining enrollment of approximately 100 students per year. Using the 2.25 students figure above, approximately 44 homes would have to be sold with 2.25 students enrolled in GPPSS, to overcome this 100 per year student drop. Of course, each house that sold would have to have no students currently attending GPPSS.

34. How accurate are Plante Moran projections?

Historically over a 5-year projection window, Plante Moran Cresa projections have a 99.4% accuracy rate.

35. Does Plante Moran's relationship with the district as the auditor affect their work on these discussions? Is there a conflict?

No. These are separate divisions within a large corporation.

36. What is the scope agreement? Where can a copy be found?

The agreement can be found on the website under the blue ribbon committee banner.

37. What "assumptions" were they (Plante Moran) given? What did they assume?

Please see the [July 31, 2017 Plante Moran report](#) to the Board of Education on the main page of the district website.

38. If a plan is agreed to by the community, what role will Plante Moran Cresa play? Are there monetary incentives?

Any future role is yet to be determined. There are no cash incentives.

39. How will the per pupil formula impact our budget 5 and 10 years out (with projected decline in pupil enrollment).

Enrollment is projected to continue to decrease for the projected future. In rough numbers, each year the loss of 100 students decreases revenue by approximately \$950,000. If this number is rounded to \$1,000,000 the decrease in revenue due to declining enrollment would be as follows:

Year #1 - \$1,000,000

Year #2 - \$2,000,000

Year #3 - \$3,000,000

The above figures are relative to the 2017-18 GPPSS budget.

40. How do we get that information regarding utilization and capacity back out to the community?

The district will continue to host open meetings of the Blue Ribbon Facilities Committee, post data online, share it with the local press, and keep the elected Board of Education informed at its

televised meetings. Once a formal recommendation goes to the Board (anticipated in December), Town Halls will be conducted throughout the spring to share information and gather insight from the community.

41. Have we looked at what redistricting looks like (proximity, numbers)?

No analysis of redistricting possibilities has been conducted at this time.

42. Do people understand closing one school impacts many with redistricting?

Depending upon the number and specific schools closed, redistricting could impact additional schools.

43. What is required once/if a building is

- Cost to demolish – Cost of demolition of an existing school facility ranges between \$5 and \$9 per square foot. This range is dependent on the extent of environmental materials in the facility required to be abated prior to demolition
- Utilization of green space
- Real estate value – Refer to PMC’s real estate assessment of recent sales of sites and facilities in the Grosse Pointe area. Another related question was posed: what was the purchase price for Liggett School? In 2014, Liggett School was purchased for \$2,186,000 and sites on 8.81 acres. This equates to approximately \$248K per acre which is in the range of PMC’s assessment

42. Please provide a spreadsheet for each school with annual operating cost, annual maintenance cost, TOTAL column, per student, 5year/10year cost

The average annual operating cost including administration, utilities, and custodial costs were provided for elementary and middle school. Please see question #44 regarding maintenance per building.

43. What is the long-term cost savings for closing a building (forget about critical needs facing now) look at it out over 30 years per building (what to allocate per year per building)

If we use an elementary school as an example, we would save approximately \$600,000 per year in operating costs. A middle school was approximately \$1.3 million in operating savings annually.

44. Can we develop an annual savings in maintenance per building

The District does not budget maintenance per building. Attached is a spreadsheet with the total amount budgeted for the general fund including the maintenance staff, and supplies and materials for maintenance and custodial. We also have a budget in the sinking fund for repairs, renovation and construction. The total budget is \$3.9 million or approximately \$2.00 per square foot. Repairs, renovation and construction are decided each year on a priority of need basis. Plante Moran has identified that to meet the maintenance needs of all our buildings it would total \$10 million on an annual basis

45. What are restrictions for historic buildings?

We are researching to determine if any of our buildings have a formal historic designation and what that would mean for any future decisions.

46. Where is the data on North and South?

Data similar to what was presented on elementary and middle schools will be provided to the committee shortly.

47. What are the finances of our peer districts?

Each school district in the State of Michigan posts a wide variety of financial and budget information on their websites.

48. What is the NPV of future capital reinvestment over 30 years?

Plante Moran would like to go over this question at the meeting on Thursday, November 16th, at Monteith Elementary.